



Pittsville: A Pictorial History



Cover images: All images used with permission.

Top row, left to right, Pittsville Water Tower photographed by Dan Parsons.

Pittsville Welcome Sign photographed by James Edward Jensen.

Middle, left to right, Coin-Op Laundry photographed by James Edward Jensen.

Tingle Printing Company, collection of Jim Jackson.

Victorian Store photographed by James Edward Jensen.

Bottom, left to right, Pittsville Ballpark photographed by Dan Parsons.

Pittsville School photographed by James Edward Jensen.

Pittsville Train Station photographed by James Edward Jensen.

Pittsville: A Pictorial History
Director of Research – James Edward Jensen
Research Assistant – Kathleen Fichtel
Statistician – Gail Cinoski

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Acknowledgements

This project came to my attention through the suggestion of the Director of the Edward H. Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History & Culture at Salisbury University, Rebecca F. Miller. Through the use of the Nabb Research Center we were able to uncover much of the early history of Pittsville by examining the records of both Maryland's Wicomico and Worcester Counties. I extend my appreciation to the Nabb Research Center staff members who graciously assisted me in my research. Dan Parsons, Curator of the Ward Museum of Water Fowl & Art, Salisbury, Maryland, assisted by offering his photography skills in photographing Pittsville in the summer of 2006. We thank you for your efforts.

However, the most important individual, responsible for numerous photographs and other ephemera on Pittsville, is Jim Jackson. Both Jim Jackson and his wife Nadine were gracious hosts as I visited their home in Pittsville where Jim Jackson has amassed enough material on Pittsville to open a museum. Without his help this pictorial history of Pittsville would lack the completeness that only images can render.

Lastly, I thank both Kathleen Fichtel and Gail Cinoski for their time and work which without which I could not have succeeded in completing this project. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Jensen', with a stylized flourish at the end.

James Edward Jensen
Director of Research
Salisbury, Maryland.

Photographic Credits

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The history of Pittsville is similar to that of many small developing towns, but what makes this story unique are the numerous photographs still surviving today. These images allow us to see snapshots of the past and enable the reader to witness the town's development, through the eyes of the photographer, covering 100 years. The camera was not present during Pittsville's birth, when the town grew from a busy crossroads with a store and a church, nor was it present when several men decided to form the Wicomico & Pocomoke Railroad Company – which was responsible for the greatest period of rapid growth in the area. Therefore, we must look to the surviving documents in order to shed light on the town's earliest years.

It remains uncertain whether or not the house that Joshua Lewis, Justice of the Peace, built around 1810 was the first home in the area now known as Pittsville, but nonetheless marks the time when people started to develop the area – dotting the landscape with more and more homes. The land upon which the town would later grow can mostly be traced back to four main land patents. The most significant land patent, covering the majority of the town's commercial center is a tract of land called "*A Gift to my First*



Son," patented 26 March 1794 by Littleton Robins containing 208 acres. This patent was a resurvey of a tract called "*Newfound Land*" which was originally granted to Thomas Robins for 75 acres. Two smaller tracts of land were patented in 1816 and known by the names of "*Dennis's Choice*" and "*Derickson's Choice*" and were located near what is now the town's center.

On 29 July 1816, both in the names of Daniel and John Dennis, a patent was issued for a tract called "*Dennis's Choice*" containing 13 acres which abutted the tract "*A Gift to my First Son*." On that same day, in the name of Levin Derickson, another patent was issued for a tract of land called "*Derickson's Choice*," containing $10\frac{3}{4}$ acres which abutted both previously mentioned tracts. One other land tract is also found mentioned throughout many of Pittsville's earliest records with a patent date of 12 November 1763, in the name of Job Truitt, containing 356 acres called "*Hardship*." These four

tracts are the original patents that cover the majority of the land from which Pittsville arose. Within a decade from 1810 the young community would grow to such a size so as to necessitate the building of a church.

...of land called & known by the name of a gift to my first son and Bounded as follows
 beginning at a marked white oak post East by the edge of the road leading from Salis-
 bury to Mitchell's Bridge & on the north side of said road and thence running north ten
 poles thence west ten poles thence south ten poles thence East ten poles to the begin-

On 6 February 1820, Henry Dennis senior and his wife Elizabeth, in consideration of the love that they both had for God and his people, granted land to William Parsons, Daniel Fooks, John Dennis, George Truitt and Thomas White as members of the Methodist Church. It was upon this ten pole square lot of land, originally part of a tract called "*A Gift to my First Son*," that the named trustees of the Methodist Church were to build a preaching house, which was also to serve as a school house. This parcel of land was located on the north side of the road leading from Salisbury to Mitchell's Bridge – the bridge once stood where the current bridge known now as Duncan Crossing Road stands and crossed the Pocomoke River. The road to Salisbury went from that bridge, south along New Hope Road, west on Old Ocean City Road, south on Highway 354, along Woodyard Road, returning to Old Ocean City Road, along Main Street through Pittsville and continued westerly to Salisbury. Through this deed Henry and Elizabeth Dennis stipulated their wish that the members of the Methodist Church forever pursuit ministers and preachers belong- ing to the said church to "preach and expound God's holy word"

in this new houses of worship.¹

By 17 November 1821, the Methodist Preaching House was referred to as the Derickson's Crossroad Meeting House as found within a deed from Henry Dennis to Billy Fooks, detailing Fooks' purchase of a six acre lot abutting the east and north sides of the said church's lot. This deed refers to six named features from the early 19th century, it lists: Porter Parsons' heirs as own- ing the property north of the church; the lots of George Truitt, Levin Derickson and John Dennis, spanning the northwest to northeast bounds of Fooks' purchase; the second road leading from Snowhill to the Methodist Line Meeting House (now known as Gumboro Road to Pittsville Road and north on Whitesville Road) and Parsons Road also called the road leading from Mitchell's Bridge to Salisbury. By examining these early deeds we are able to view a snap shot of Pittsville's early history from a time before the invention of the camera, enabling us to visualize the lay of the land and the importance of roads as a means to travel from home to towns and churches.²

side of the road leading from Mitchell's Bridge on the pocomo-
 moke river to Salisbury it being the southeast corner of the
 Methodist preaching house lot called the Derickson's Road
 Meeting house and from thence north ten poles to the north
 side of the road leading from Mitchell's Bridge to Salisbury

part of a tract of land called "A Gift to my first son", which tract is situated in Worcester County and at Dickinson's Cross Roads, which is contained in the following bounds. Beginning for this part, on the Pacheco Road about one hundred yards from the Store House that was built by Levin Dickinson at the end of a two foot ditch, thence

A List of Sales of the Goods Chattels and Personal estate of Levin Dickinson late of Worcester County deceased sold at vendue the 10th day of April Anno Domini 1817

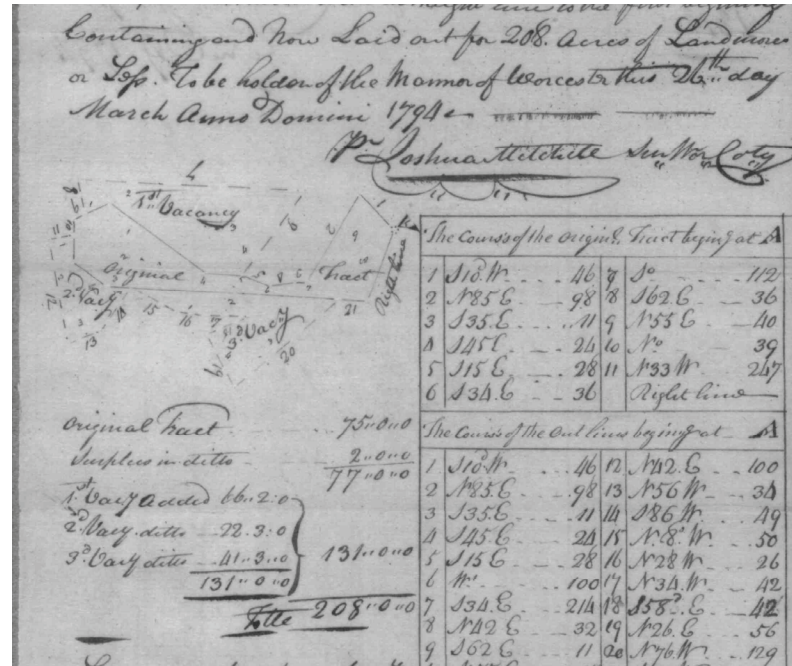
James Derickson purchased 25 acres of land from Henry Dennis Senior on the 22 December 1822. This parcel of land was part of the original tract called "A Gift to my First Son." The original Store House, from which Derickson's Crossroads acquired its name, was located near this parcel of land and built by Levin Derickson sometime before 19 March 1817 when James Derickson took out letters of administration as his executive administrator. From his administration Bond we learn that Elizabeth Derickson declined taking out letters of administration for her late husband Levin and in her place their son James took up the task. The Store House is referred to in a later deed dated 15 February 1834, which details the 6 acres purchased by Benjamin H. Byrd and his brother in-law James M. Fooks from Henry Dennis. Also being part of the original tract of land called "A Gift to my First Son," this

document demonstrates how the area later known as Pittsville was being subdivided into smaller parcels along the road from Mitchell's Bridge to Salisbury as early as the 1820s and 30s.³

Following the death of Levin Derickson, in 1817, an inventory of his estate, both personal and real, was taken and sold at public auction. The inventory makes special mention of the articles sold at the "Cross Roads" and states the appraised value applied to the store items he had in stock at the time of his death. The store offered clients everything from kitchen utensils, locks and farming tools to shoes, spices and fabrics. Among the more luxurious items found within the inventory are silk buttons, bonnets, snuff, seer sucker fabric, turtle combs and sets of children's cups & saucers.⁴

3 Quire Paper	1	58	"	"
A List of articles sold at the Cross Roads in the forest				
1 Keg of Paint	5	40	2	50
2 Sugs of oil	1	50	5	50
5 Whisk Barrels	1	25	2	50
4 Brandy Barrels	2	2	1	00
1 molasses Dr.	"	61	"	50
9 open Barrels	"	54	"	50
1 molasses Whisk	"	75	1	25
2 open Casks	"	30	"	40
5 melle Bottles	7	15	10	"
1/2 Bushel Linen	"	50	"	100
1 Green Plow	2	60	"	75
4 wooden Bones	"	55	1	"
52 1/2 Feet of Scantling at Salisbury 90				
700 L ^{ts} at Peterborough 3/4	2	18	7	"
15 Bushels of Flour	12	"	18	75
10 B ^{ts} feathers	5	00	"	"
15 B ^{ts} Peas	"	60	"	60
1 Caddis	"	75	"	75

During the ten years that followed, Derickson's Cross Roads had a staggering period of both moderate and static growth. With the cross roads providing easy access to the Derickson's Cross Roads' store the location was even selected as a polling station. During the legislative session of 1823, an act was passed concerning the location of the polling place in the 4th election district of Worcester County. Apparently, the previous location was causing the people of the district undue inconveniences. This act's passage allowed for the place to be changed to Derickson's Cross Roads; whichever house chosen for the relocation would receive a certificate and would henceforth be the locale of future elections in the area. In 1837, this issue was again brought before the legislature; the location of elections was changed at that point to "the tenement or house adjoining the tavern house of James Derickson, in the town of Berlin, in said county."



Joshua Mitchell Gray Surveyor of Worcester County do hereby certify that I have carefully surveyed and laid out for the ap. Daniel Dennis & John Dennis of the County for the ap. all that tract or parcel of land called Dennis's Choice situated lying and being in Worcester County Bounded & Described as follows the Beginning for this survey at a marked highwood post set up at the end of the second & beginning of the third line of a tract of land called a Gift to my first son formerly Resurveyed for Littleton Robins senr. near a place called the Cross Road, then

Gift to my first son then running said second line of the first son South eighty five degrees West thirty perches to the end of the third course of a tract of Land called Fladship then running the same South twenty six degrees West two perches then South sixteen degrees East thirty two perches then North eighty five degrees East fifty two perches to the end of the second line of Dennis's Choice then running

the said line of the first son containing 10 3/4 acres of land

Joshua Mitchell Gray Surveyor of Worcester County do hereby certify that I have carefully surveyed and laid out for the ap. Daniel Dennis & John Dennis of the County for the ap. all that tract or parcel of land called Dennis's Choice situated lying and being in Worcester County Bounded & Described as follows the Beginning for this survey at a marked highwood post set up at the end of the second & beginning of the third line of a tract of land called a Gift to my first son formerly Resurveyed for Littleton Robins senr. near a place called the Cross Road, then

Pictured here are extracts from the patents of "A Gift to my First Son," "Dennis's Choice" and "Derickson's Choice."

*Articles of agreement
between Benjamin H Byrd
and James M Fooks*

The Fooks & Byrd Store

The next phase of Pittsville's history comes with the new store owners, namely Benjamin H. Byrd and his brother-in-law James M. Fooks.

From the will of James' fa-

ther, Jonathan Fooks (of Daniel), proven the 27 August 1833, much of the land where Pittsville would later rise is distributed to his children James Minos Fooks and Henrietta Byrd. His only other daughter Priscilla was to give her two sons, Jonathan and Henry Bacon, \$600.00 plus interest upon turning twenty years of age. This legacy and the hundreds of acres he accumulated were to be given to the next generation of the Fooks family and through Jonathan Fooks' diligence his son and son-in-law entered a contract detailing their to-be partnership as store owners. This contract begins as follows:

"Articles of Agreement made this second day of January Eighteen hundred and thirty two b[e]twene Benjamin H Byrd of Somerset County State of Maryland and James M Fooks of Worcester County State aforesaid the said parties do mutually agree to enter into partnership in a store now on hand at the place by the name of Starlingburg formally Dericksons + Roads and each of said parties have laid in stock as follows, Benjamin H Byrd has laid in five hundred and seventy two dollars and fifty cents and James M Fooks has laid in seven hundred and seventy two dollars and eighty seven and half cents and the profits and losses of said store are to be devided agreeable to said stock among said parties and each of their heirs or assigns and James M Fooks is to be allowed ninety dollars per year and his bord and washing found him for his attendance on said store which he is to attend to faithfully and the Benjamin H Byrd and James M Fooks are between them equally to be allowed the sum of thirty dollars and election salallerys for the use of the store house and each party or their heirs are to have a priveledge of a fare dividend on said stock and the profits and losses there at any time when they may choose to the true performance of which we each bind ourselves and each of our heirs as witness my our hands and seals

Jonathan Fooks (of D)

Benjamin H Byrd {seal}

Nancy Simpson

James M Fooks {seal}

Maryann Fooks"

From this contract the most striking discovery is that it remains the only known document which mentions the area having changed names from Derickson's Crossroads to Starlingburg. Apparently the new name of Starlingburg never caught on because Derickson's Crossroads appears in all other documentation until the name was changed to Pittsville.⁶

Articles of agreement made this Second day of January Eighteen hundred and thirty two between Benjamin H Byrd of Somerset County State of Maryland and James M Fooks of Worcester County State aforesaid the said parties do mutually agree to enter into Partnership in a Store now on hand at the place by the name of Starlingburg formally Dericksons + Roads and each of said parties have laid in Stock as follows, Benjamin H Byrd has laid in five hundred and seventy two Dollars and fifty Cents and James M Fooks has laid in seven hundred and seventy two Dollars and eighty seven and half Cents and the profits and losses of said Store are to be devided agreeable to said Stock among said parties and each of their heirs or assigns and James M Fooks is to be allowed ninety Dollars per year and his bord and washing found him for his attendance on said Store which he is to attend to faithfully and the Benjamin H Byrd and James M Fooks are between them Equally to be allowed the Sum of thirty Dollars and the Election Salallerys for the use of the Store house and each party or their heirs are to have a priveledge of a fare Dividend on said Stock and the profits and losses thereof at any time when they may choose to the true performance of which we each bind ourselves and each of our heirs as witnesses our hands and seals

Jonathan Fooks (of D) Benjamin H Byrd (seal)
Nancy Simpson James M Fooks (seal)
Maryann Fooks

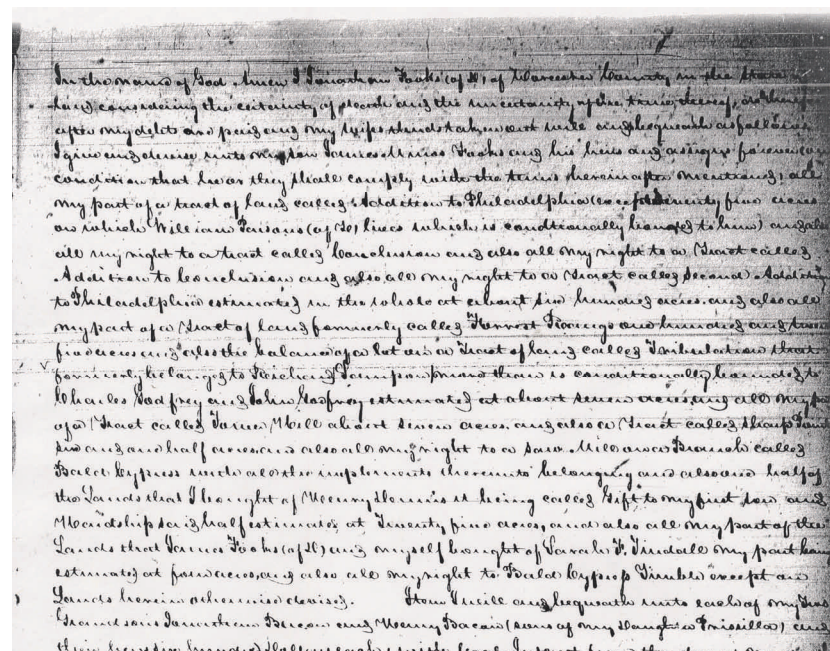
Over the next few years both brothers jointly purchased goods and land in the surrounding area. On 9 June 1832, Benjamin H. Byrd and James M. Fooks purchased 6 acres of land being part of the original tract called "Hardship," which said tract was to the south and west of "A Gift to my First Son." In addition, on 15 February 1834, Benjamin H. Byrd and James M. Fooks purchased 36 acres from Job Truitt (of G) being of the original tract called "Huckster's Choice." As a further example of their early partnership, the two men are listed as buyers on two Bill of Sale documents, the first listing goods and livestock purchased from Joshua Hambling [Hamblin] and the second from Nathaniel Vincent, both dating to 14 January 1835. Within these sales records Benjamin H. Byrd is listed as being of Somerset County whereas James M. Fooks remains a Worcester County resident. The partnership continued despite Benjamin's move, since only James was required to stay at the store to maintain daily operations. While living out the remainder of his life in Worcester County, James M. Fooks remained a central character both as a store owner and county commissioner.⁷

By 1856 the partnership of Benjamin H. Byrd and James M. Fooks was selling off property as seen in a deed to Peter Parsons (of M) from the two brothers and their respective wives. This particular deed referenced the sale of 160 acres of land being parts of the original tracts called "A Gift to my First Son" and "Hardship."⁸

James Fooks and Benjamin Byrd: Proprietors of Pittsville

In 1834, the relationship between the two men was strengthened further through marriage; Benjamin married James' sister, Henrietta, making them both brother-in-laws and co-proprietors. James married his first cousin, Maria, in the same year; it seemed that both were following a relatively similar path to independent, self-sufficient adulthood. Shortly before this great leap forward for both men, Jonathan Fooks, father of James, passed away (1834) and left much of his property to him: "I give

and devise unto my son James Minos Fooks and his heirs and assigns forever on condition that he or they shall comply with the terms hereinafter mentioned all my part of a land called "*Addition to Philadelphia*" except seventy-five acres on which William Parsons lives..." (from the will of Jonathan Fooks, found in: *Fooks Family*, by Herbert C. Fooks.) Besides the seventy five acres listed above, James also received the rights to the tracts of lands "*Conclusion*," "*Addition to Conclusion*," "*Second Addition to Philadelphia*," "*Tribulation*," "*Tower Mill*," "*Sharp Point*," and a saw mill on the tract called "*Bald Cypress*." His daughter, Henrietta, who married Byrd, also received some land from her father upon his death, as well as \$500.00. Jonathan Fooks was a prominent man in the area later known as Pittsville, owning as much land as he did, and he helped further the careers of both his son James and his son-in-law Benjamin through his bequests to them and their families.⁹



In the 1840 census, less than a decade after marriage and entering into the general merchandising business, James M Fooks was listed as being a male between the ages of 30 and 40, with 12 others in his household: 1 male and 2 females, aged 0-5; 1 male and 1 female, aged 5-10; 1 male and 1 female aged 10-15, 2

males and 1 female aged 15-20, 1 female, age 20-30; 1 female aged 30-40. Being as his marriage was not too long before this census data was procured, it can be assumed that some of those listed within his household were his siblings and servants;

the names and status of each of the members of the house were not given in this particular document. Ten years later, in the 1850 census, James is listed as being 41, with Maria (age 37), Jonathan (age 14), Ann E (age 13), Maria E (age 11), Minois H (age 8), Maryetta (age 3), and Sarah P. (age 3-12).¹⁰

By 1862, James M. Fooks had passed away; at this time, orphan's court proceedings relating to his underage children, as well as a list of debts due to him, can be found in the public records of Worcester County, Maryland. His inventory, of over 500 items, stands as a permanent testament to the interesting life

he led as a store manager/owner; he owned many items that seem unique for a person of his period and standing. Among some of the more interesting items mentioned are a washing machine, Johnson's Encyclopedia, several dictionaries, a "congressional" globe, a map of the United States, a map of Palestine, and 4 Venetian blinds;

clearly, his choice of goods, with which he stocked his store, would have a direct impact on the lifestyles of those who shopped there.¹¹

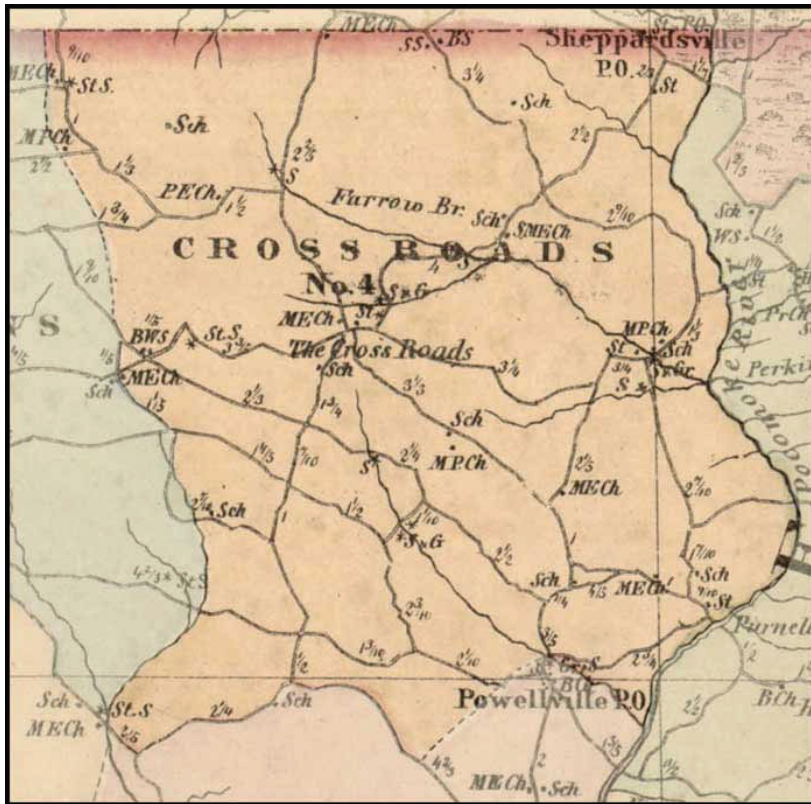
A will was not found for Benjamin Byrd, but his wife, Henrietta, the sister of James

Fooks, passed away

on 16 January 1890. In her will (written in August 1889), she left the sum of \$1500 to Saint Peter's Protestant Episcopal Church (specifically to pay off the mortgage), with the remainder of her estate going to her grandson Harvey Byrd Morris; if he died without issue, it was then to go to the children of her brother James.

Both Byrd and Fooks were important men to Pittsville's history, as they exemplified the value of initiative and perseverance in a small, rural township, they remained linked to the area there until their deaths and intimately connected their livelihoods to the success of the region as a whole.

34		Rebecca "	70	F	12		
35	32	32	Jas M. Fooks	41	M	Trainer	30000
36			Maria "	37	F		
37			Jonathan "	14	M		
38			Ann E. "	13	F		
39			Maria E. "	11	F		
40			Minois H. "	8	M		
41			Maryetta "	3	F		
42			Sarah P. "	3	F		



Then came the railroad...

On February 15, 1848, an act was passed during the Maryland legislative session of that year to “incorporate the Wicomico and Pocomoke Rail Road Company.” The law detailed all aspects of the newly-formed corporation, and granted all rights associated with legal incorporated status to them; they were thus “capable in law of purchasing, holding, selling, leasing and conveying estates, real, personal and mixed, so far as shall be necessary for the purposes mentioned herein and no further,” as well as the ability to “sue and be sued.” The text of the law detailed the selling of subscriptions of the shares of the company, and set out the procedure for electing a board of di-

rectors, yearly, from amongst the pool of those who had purchased shares. The president and elected board members had the responsibility of selling subscriptions to the company and then to set about constructing, maintaining and ultimately caring for the newly established tracks that would reach “from some suitable point on the Wicomico River at Salisbury, via Derickson’s Cross Roads to some other suitable point on the Pocomoke River in the neighborhood of Mitchell’s Bridge,” with the proviso that an additional span could be added as far as Berlin if it was deemed necessary.¹²

Many other details regarding the management of the company were outlined within the text; rates for the tolls to be charged, as well as the dates of dividend dispensation, are a few examples of the many stipulations that were set forth. The company did not, however, have the right or ability to act as a bank, such as by issuing notes of any kind or promising to make a future payment based on debts owed from others. If the construction of the railroad did not begin within 5 years of the passage of the act, then it would be considered null and void. The construction of the railroad was supposed to be completed by 1857 (within a period of ten years); however, the final section of the law stated that it could be amended and altered by future legislation. The law also set out the procedure for obtaining land and materials for the construction of the railway, and prohibited the company from impeding travel in any way on roads that existed prior to their incorporation. In 1864, 17 years after the initial passage of this law, “an act to revive and extend an act to incorporate the Wicomico and Pocomoke Railroad Company” was passed on the third of March. The act was written almost exactly the same as when it had been previously passed by the Maryland legislature—the company received an extension of the clauses set forth at that time as the former act had expired. The incorporation of the Wicomico and Pocomoke rail company changed both the face and function of the small agricultural community of Derickson’s Cross Roads.¹³

Another rail company, the Worcester Rail Road Company, was incorporated around the same time; the official act of incorporation was passed on May 24, 1853. It established that “the purposes and objects for which the Worcester rail road company aforesaid, is incorporated, for the locating, making, constructing, and repairing a rail road, from some point on the Virginia state line, to run through Worcester County to the Delaware state line.” The major points of the act are similar to the previous one mentioned, for it gave specific guidelines for the running of the company, including the election of officials, the sale of shares, the payment of dividends, and the procurement of raw materials and land necessary for the construction to take place within the allotted amount of time.¹⁴

This period of rapid railroad development physically changed the landscape, but more importantly it connected the Eastern Shore to larger nationwide markets and brought the area into a new era of growth and centralization. Without the railroad, completed in 1868, the town would never have reached the size and population it achieved so early on when some people say it was at one time greater than Ocean City, Maryland, which would have been quite impressive for a town that grew up around a general store at the cross roads. Although, most importantly, without the railroad the town would never have had its name changed to Pittsville.

Dr. Hilary R. Pitts

Pittsville’s train station and subsequently the town itself were named for the area’s eminent physician who was also the president of the Wicomico and Pocomoke Railroad Company, Dr. Hilary R. Pitts. Much of the information found relating to him came from the volumes of census data compiled in the town of Berlin. In the 1850 census, he is listed as the head of household 300, with Rebecca, his wife, aged 34 and 26 respectively. The previous year, in 1849, he had applied for a license to marry Rebecca Bowen, and during the following decade the couple had

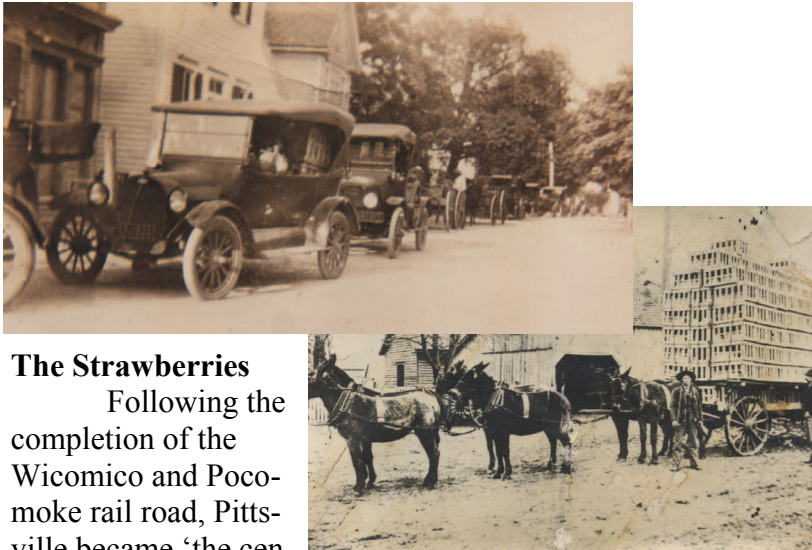
four children together. In the 1860 census, he is listed as 43 years of age, with Rebecca, aged 34, and their four children, as follows: James (age 10), Julia (age 8), Sarah (age 4) and Mary (age 2), with one African-American servant named George Carey. A decade later, Dr. Pitts was listed as 53 years of age, but at this point, his wife Rebecca was not mentioned – she died in the years between 1860 and 1870. The names of his children were recorded differently than they previously had been, although their ages were consistent with the data provided 10 years prior: James (20) (employed as a clerk), Julia (age 18), Grace (age 14) and Minnie (age 12). At this point in time, Hilary Pitts had \$10,000 worth of property to his name. In the 1870 census he was cited as being the president of the Wicomico and Pocomoke Railroad Company, with his office located in the city of Berlin. In the next census, taken in 1880, Dr. Pitts was 64 years of age, with his four children still residing with him: James (age 30), Julia (age 28), Mary (age 26) and Grace (age 24). His three daughters had been running the household for him, it seemed, as his wife had died and he did not remarry. From the census data provided for the town, it is known that Dr. Pitts lived in household 300 for at least 30 years, through the childhoods and early adulthoods of all four of his children, as well as the death of his wife Rebecca (Bowen). The train station was named for him by 1870, which should not come as a surprise considering he was the area’s physician at that time, as well as

being president of the (fairly) newly incorporated railroad company based in the area.¹⁵

BERLIN BUSINESS REFERENCES.

JAMES C. DIRICKSON, Physician and Surgeon.
S. P. REED, Dealer in Dry Goods, Groceries, Boots, Shoes, Hats, Caps, and Notions. All kinds of goods usually kept in a country store. Store at Tannery.
JAS. M. BRATTEN, Dealer in Dry Goods, Groceries, Boots, Shoes, Hats, Caps, and Notions.
JOHN W. STATON, Dealer in Dry Goods, Groceries, Queensware, Boots, Shoes, and General Merchandise.
H. R. PITTS, President of Wicomico & Pocomoke R. R. Office at Berlin.

By 1868 there was another name change that took place, where Wicomico County's former election district four known as Cross Roads was from thence to be called Pittsburg election district. Although some speculate that the election district was also named for Dr. Hilary R. Pitts, it remains more likely that the election district took on the name due to the largest town in the area, the town of Pittsville. Therefore, Pittsburg election district may not have been named directly to honor Dr. Pitts, but the influence he had over the naming of the Pittsville train station would inevitably allow him to immortalize his name on maps of the Eastern Shore.¹⁶



The Strawberries

Following the completion of the Wicomico and Pocomoke rail road, Pittsville became 'the center' for eastern Wicomico County's shipping industry. Farmers would bring in their produce, sell their crops and the buyers would fill train cars with their newly purchased inventory ready to be shipped all over the country. From the late 19th century through the early few decades of the 20th century, Pittsville

boasted the largest "auction block in the County for the sale of berries."¹⁷

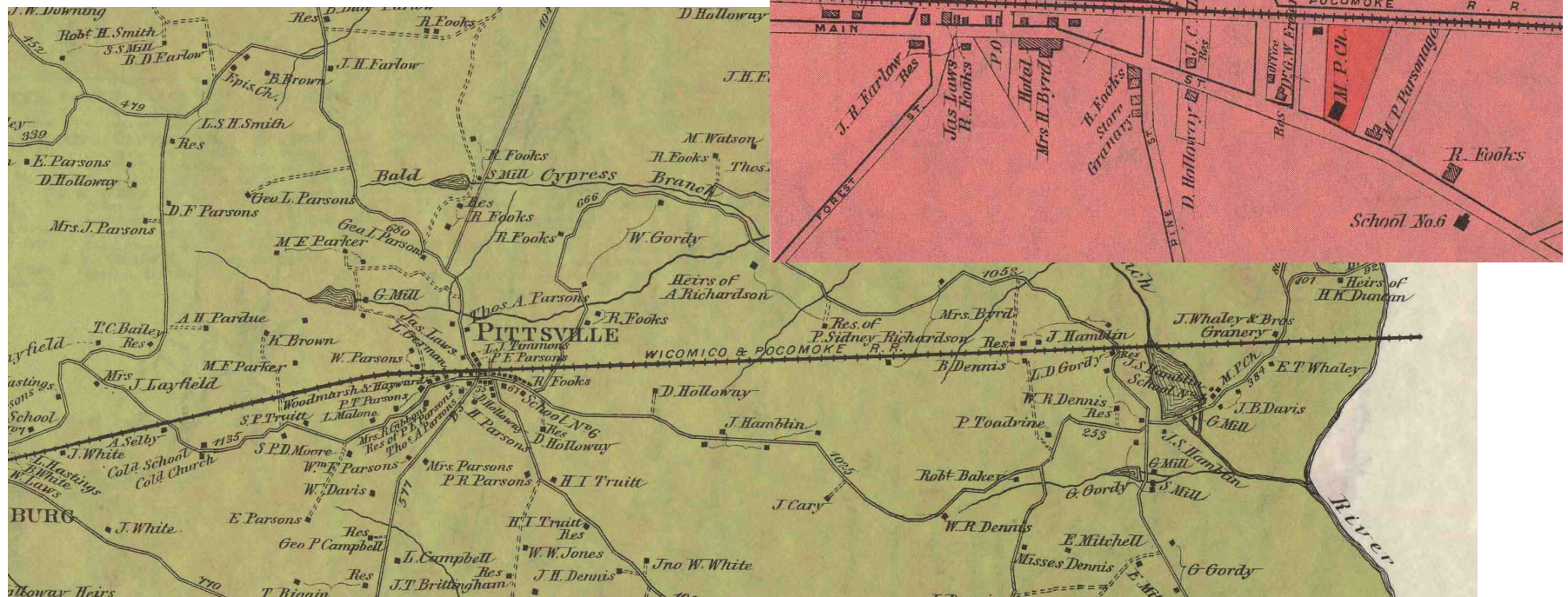
The originator of the culture of strawberries in the Pittsville area is somewhat debated, but nonetheless the town owes a debt of gratitude to the small red fruit for its growth and development. The first strawberries in the area are reported to have been "cultivated in the wild state" by George and Henry Adams in the small southern Delaware village of Portsville. From this agricultural adventure a new cash crop was born. The first recorded shipment of strawberries from Pittsville was made by Richy Fooks, L. T. Timmons and Dr. G. W. Truitt in 1868. Others also are reported to have played an integral role in the development of the culture of the strawberries, such as Dr. G. W. Freeny.¹⁸



Pittsville in 1877

Following the introduction of the railroad and the subsequent increase in population, Pittsville began to take on a more familiar face with several stores, shops and manufacturers. In the year 1877, Pittsville could boast three dealers in dry goods & groceries (J. W. Davis, West & Rounds and Ritchie Fooks), three dealers & manufacturers of lumber (Holloway & Messick, George P. Campbell and J. H. West), a cabinet maker named Samuel F. Farlow and G. W. Freeny as both physician and surgeon. In addition, the town also had a school house, the Mrs. H. Byrd Hotel, a granary, a grain house, depot at the side of the railroad, a post office and the Church & Parsonage. Several people resided in the town's center and Main Street was home to more than 20 structures. For transportation there were numerous roads, but the County and State had not yet begun to

straighten out and create new roads since most long distant traveling was done on either horseback or via train. The rail-line was still under the name of the Wicomico & Pocomoke Railroad and both the old Ocean City Highway and Route 50 were scarcely a dream.



Pittsville Man in Politics

Three members of the Maryland Legislature of 1896 are profiled in the 1896 edition of *Maryland Manual*. William S. Moore of Wicomico County, born in 1839, had served two terms in the Maryland Legislature at the point of the publication, he also was the elected tax collector and the sheriff of his home county. He was apparently well-informed of political matters and also served on several governmental committees. Granville M. Catlin, the second listed, was new to politics in 1896 as he had been in the oyster business up until that point; due to his experience, he was a member of the committee on the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The last profiled was George T. Truitt, a native of the town of Pittsville. He had spent his time making a living in the lumber business and like Catlin, had not been involved in politics for very long at that point; however, he was known to have been shrewd and knowledgeable. During his tenure in office he had been a member of several committees, most notably for him (as he was from Pittsville) the committee on railroads and canals. He died on March 23, 1896, shortly after being elected. He was the fourth elected official to die within that four-month time period from the November 1895 election.



The Incorporation of Pittsville 1906-1908

The Act to incorporate the town of Pittsville was first passed and approved on 3 April 1906. From a survey of the town, completed in March of that year, the corporate bounds of the town contained 200 acres, more or less, covering the general area of the town's center on both sides of Main Street and extending to the north side of the Baltimore, Chesapeake & Atlantic Railroad. The Act detailed, through 12 sections, the specific rights and privileges that were to be enjoyed by the citizens of Pittsville through the town commissioners. Each year three judges were to be appointed to hold the elections for town commissioners – keeping the polls open from 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. The two commissioners securing the highest votes were to hold office for two years, while the remaining three commissioners were to have a term of one year. In order to run for commissioner one had to be a United

States citizen of twenty-one years or older residing in Pittsville for six months prior to the election and hold property in Pittsville with an assessment of no less than \$500.00. The commissioners were authorized to appoint a bailiff, clerk, and treasurer, and hold the power to pass any ordinance they find fit for the good of the town. In order to hold the first election P. T. Baker, James W. Parker and D. James Davis were appointed registers and judges to create the first voters list.¹⁹



The Town of Pittsville in 1908

A snap shot of life in Pittsville from the early 20th century can be found in an article written for the Salisbury Advertiser and printed July 11th 1908. The author is unknown, but signed the article titled, *Town of Pittsville: Sketch of its Foundation and Growth*, simply as *A Citizen*. The article places the town's population at about 300 being supported by 2 churches and a school which taught 150 students at the hands of only 3 teachers; a seemingly daunting task by today's standards. It mentions the town bank which began around 1906, as having paid up capital in the amount of \$25,000 and was managed by M. A. Davis, as cashier. In 1908 Pittsville had six merchants grossing over \$50,000 annually, among them Mrs. J. E. Richardson's millinery store where ladies could buy fine hats. The town had two hotels, two doctors (G. W. Freeny and L. C. Freeny), mechanics able to erect buildings (headed by Mr. James R. Freeny) and a livery, the latter being run by Mr. G. A. Shockley. A large portion of the

population was involved in some aspect of farming, where the main crops were corn, clover, peas, potatoes, strawberries and even wheat. Associated with the farming industry are the crate and basket factory, along with its lumber mill, which made the Petey Manufacturing Company among the more profitable businesses at that time; not to mention the benefits this firm brought the town as it employed some fifty workers a day at more than \$1.00 for a day's wage. There was also a canning factory owned by Mr. H. James Cleveland White, which hired over 100 workers at peak season. However, for those not working directly in the farming industry there was also Mr. H. James Truitt's shirt factory with the capacity to run thirty machines. During these years of change and growth, Pittsville experienced the renaming of the railroad to the Baltimore, Chesapeake & Atlantic Rail Road, an increase in trucking and a further need for new and improved roads as the dominance of trains began to give way to motorized trucks and the automobile.²⁰

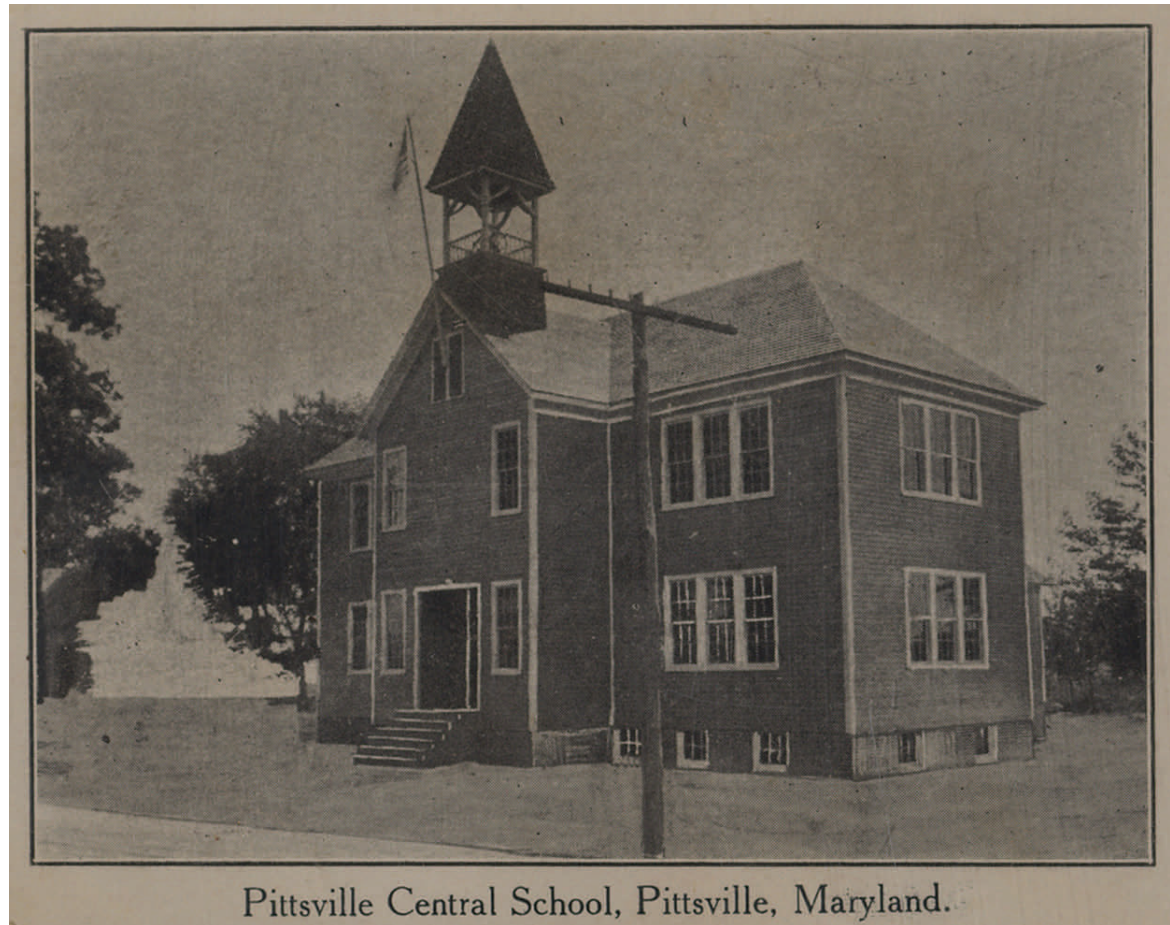


The construction of a schoolhouse in Pittsville

An Act of Legislature, passed in 1910, specifically mentioned Pittsville as the location of a forthcoming schoolhouse; it began by mentioning the burgeoning population in Wicomico County and therefore pointed out both the need for new educational facilities and the expenses that would naturally coincide with the inception of such projects. The act called for bonds to be issued by the Wicomico County Commissioners to cover the expenditure of capital that was going into the building of new schoolhouses (specifically in Pittsville and Hebron) as well as going towards adequately equipping both the new schools and others already in existence. Within the text, the maximum value of bonds that could be issued under this particular act was set at the amount of \$30,000; the interest rate for repayment was also included. All of the bonds were to be distributed on July 1st of that year, and “the sum raised by the issue and sale of said bonds shall be exclusively appropriated and applied to the payment of indebtedness incurred by the County Commissioners of Wicomico County and the Board of County School Commissioners of Wicomico County.”²¹

Therefore, as a further example of the development and growth of Pittsville during the early 20th century, the creation of a new school house along

with the necessity to incorporate the town reflect the rapid rate of population increase in the years before the First World War. With the number of merchants and professionals increasing, the town was now far removed from being known only as the largest auction block and had developed into a thriving community.



Pittsville Central School, Pittsville, Maryland.

STATE Maryland COUNTY Harmon TOWNSHIP OR OTHER DIVISION OF COUNTY Pittsville NAME OF INCORPORATED PLACE Pittsville ENUMERATED BY ME ON THE 7th DAY OF January, 1920

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE—BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
 51 [D.C.—578]
 FOURTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES: 1920—POPULATION

NAME OF INSTITUTION _____

PLACE OF ABODE. NAMES of each person whose place of abode on January 1, 1920 was in this family. State surname first, then the given name and middle initial, if any. Include every person living on January 1, 1920. Omit children born after January 1, 1920.

PLACE OF ABODE.	NAMES	RELATION	SEX	PERSONAL DESCRIPTION	CITIZENSHIP	EDUCATION	NATIVITY AND MOTHER TONGUE.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
49	46	Denise, Rena	Head	10	20	21	22
		Annie, J.	Wife	7	21	22	23
		Michael, D.	Son	7	21	22	23
		Robert, E.	Son	7	21	22	23

and only 42% arriving from as far away as Hungary.²²

The 1920s & 30s

From an analysis of the 1920 Federal Census and the following 1930 counterpart, the individual people of the town of Pittsville come to light. The benefit of these modern statistical surveys is that they delve into details of population, ethnicity, literacy and employment to name a few. From these documents the following information was drawn, which paints a picture of the changing demographics of Pittsville over a decade from the roaring 20s to the beginning of the Great Depression.

In 1920 the total population Pittsville was 707 throughout 179 households. Of these 70.4 % owned their dwellings while 26.3% rented – with 3.3% as unlisted. Children made up 41.3% of the town's people with 23.2% of the total population being males under 21 years of age and where 18.1% of the total population being females under 16 years of age. The town of Pittsville had a 66.5% literacy rate as a whole, with 18.1% of the population attending school. The ethnic make up of the town was:

Caucasian:	91.8%
African American:	8.2%

Of these inhabitants 91.4% were born in Maryland with the remaining 8.6%, of the total population, being born mostly in Delaware, with a few migrating from New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Virginia; while 1% came from Canada

Pittsville had 35.4% of its total population employed, where 62.4% were men and only 17.6% were women – 20% of the occupations were illegible, perhaps skewing the women's statistics, although the days of Rosie the Riveter were somewhat far off. The male occupations were dominated by farmers, making up 44.9% of male employment, with a further 15.4% listed as farm laborers. The remainder of male occupations were broken down as follows: 10.3% general laborers, 6.4% farm produce brokers, 3.2% merchants, 3.8% carpenters, 1.3% auto mechanics, 1.3% railway brakemen and with at least one man employed as a store house manager, Lumber Team Driver, Railway Engineman, Proprietor, At-home Shoemaker, Railway Agent, Banker, Assistant banker, Blacksmith, Assistant Blacksmith, High School Teacher, Manager, Butcher, Barber, Community Agent, Railway Telegraph Operator, Salesman, Canner, Forman or Clerk. The female Occupations were dominated by shirt factory seamstresses at 56.8% of the female work force. The remainder of female occupations were broken down as follows: 11.4% public school teachers, 4.5% teachers, 2.3% Catholic school teachers, 4.5% and at least one woman employed as either at-home washerwoman, out-of-home washerwoman, domestic servant, shirt button sewer, domestic cook, railway office clerk or shirt factory forelady.²³

Form 15-4
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE—BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
FIFTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES: 1930
POPULATION SCHEDULE

In 1930 the total population of Pittsville had more than doubled over 10 years and numbered 1636 inhabitants, with 26.7% residing near the town's core and 73.3% residing in the town's periphery. There were now 425 households, where 73% owned their dwellings while 27% rented. Of these households, 46.5% lived on farms while 53.5% did not. One very interesting fact coming from this 1930 census was that only 13.2% of households had a radio set. Women made up 32.5% of the total population while men represented only 27.6%. Children made up 39.8% of the town's people with 22.2% of the total population being males under 21 years of age and where 17.6% of the total population being females under 16 years of age. The town of Pittsville had increased to a 76.8% literacy rate as a whole, with 21% of the population now attending school. The ethnic make up of the town remained nearly the same at:

Caucasian:	92.1%
African American:	7.9%

Of these inhabitants 84.4% of the total population was born in Maryland, illustrating that between 1920 and 1930 there was an increase in immigration to Pittsville from outside of the state of Maryland. The remainder of the population made up 15.6% and came mostly from Delaware; some came from nearby Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Shore Island; while others traveled farther from Ohio, North Carolina, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Tennessee, New Hampshire, Texas, South Carolina, Kansas, New York, Colorado, Montana, Michigan, Connecticut, California, Missouri. There were even a few who immigrated to area of Pittsville who were born in Austria, England, Italy and Northern Ireland.²⁴

Pittsville had 35.4% of its total population employed, where 87.6% were men and only 12.4% were women – 1.2% of the total population was Veteran soldiers. The male occupations were dominated by farmers, farmer laborers and assistant farmers, making up 55.7% of male employment. The remainder of male occupations was broken down as follows: 7.2% odd job laborers, 5.4% nursery laborers, 2.4% machinists at auto repair shop, 2.4% salesmen (general), 2% lumber mill laborers, 1.6% carpenters, 1.6% retail merchants, 1.4 nursery proprietors, a few men employed as auto repair shop apprentices, proprietors (general), County roads laborers, clergymen, railroad brakemen, automobile salesmen, railroad section laborers, laborers for state roads, chauffeurs, printers, proprietors of garages, US mail carriers, house painters, blacksmiths, shirt factory machinist, proprietors of lumber mills, life insurance agents, machinists (general), contractors, masons, barbers, managers (general), and at least one man as a public school janitor, stenographer, bank cashier, machinist at an iron foundry, auto parts salesman, assistant bank cashier, state roads inspector, railroad section forman, bridges engineer, railroad agent, public service collector, railroad express messenger, lumber mill sawyer, restaurant proprietor, lumber mill teamster, bookkeeper, sea food salesman, painter, Newspaper Collector, Undertaker, Lumber Salesman, Truck Driver, County Roads Supervisor, Proprietor Crate Factory, Broker, Forman Auto Repair Shop, Produce Dealer, State Police Officer, Stock Work, Shoemaker, Furniture Store Polisher, Apprentice Carpenter, Postmaster, Railroad Fireman, Proprietor Auto Truck, Railroad Machinist, Photographer, Baker, Proprietor General Store, Plumber, Machinist, Engineer Railroad and Shirt Factory Laborer.²⁵

State Maryland Incorporated place _____
 County Wicomico Ward of city _____ Block No. _____
 Township or other division of county Pittsville town Unincorporated place _____
 (Insert proper name and also name of class, as township, town, precinct, district, etc. See instructions.) (Enter name of any unincorporated place having approximately 500 inhabitants or more. See instructions.)

PLACE OF ABODE				NAME of each person whose place of abode on April 1, 1930, was in this family Enter surname first, then the given name and middle initial, if any Include every person living on April 1, 1930. Omit children born since April 1, 1930	RELATION Relationship of this person to the head of the family	HOME DATA				PERSONAL DESCRIPTION				EDUCATION		Place of birth of each person the United States, give St which birthplace is now: I French from Canada-Eng		
Street, house or lot no.	House number (in cities or towns)	Number of dwell- ing houses in order of occu- pation	Number of family in order of rela- tion			Name owned or leased	Vat. of home, if ac- quired, sold, or leased, if not	Radic at	Does this family live on farm?	Sex	Color or race	Age at last birthday	Marital con- dition	Age at first marriage	Attended school or college any time during Sept. 1, 1929		Whether able to read and write	PERSON
																		1
1			1	1	Middleton John J.	Head	0	own R	Y	M	W	58	M	21	No	Y	Delaware	
2					— Lelania K	Wife-H			X	F	W	55	M	18	No	Y	Maryland	
3					— Lewis J	Son			X	M	W	16	S		No	Y	Maryland	
4					— Lillian M	Daughter			X	F	W	9	S		Y	15	Maryland	
5					Clark Mary I	Boarder			X	F	W	34	S		No	Y	Virginia	
6																		

The female Occupations were dominated by shirt factory

mained at around 60%, the rest performed other jobs as the

The female Occupations were dominated by shirt factory Operators at 35.6% of the female work force. The remainder of female occupations were broken down as follows: 11.4% public school teachers, 4.5% teachers, 2.3% Catholic school teachers, 4.5%, a few women employed as 26% Public School Teachers, 12.3% Laundress, 9.6% Servants in Private Homes, Nurses in Private Homes, Secretary, Stenographers, Antique Shop Proprietors and at least one woman as a Forlady in a Shirt Factory, Seamstress, Catholic School Teacher, At-home Dressmaker and Postmistress.²⁶

The census data gathered from Pittsville in 1920 and again in 1930 clearly shows the agrarian nature of the township as a whole. Though the population of the town more than doubled during the 1920s, increasing from 707 people to 1,636 by 1930, the percentage of adult males engaged in farming on some level (whether they were farmers, assistants, or laborers) re-

mained at around 60%; the rest performed other jobs as they were needed and spent their time as carpenters, plumbers, general laborers, etc. The majority of women who were employed in Pittsville during the decade in question worked as seamstresses in the shirt factory, while the remainder were engaged in teaching, secretarial work or general domestic tasks such as laundering. Literacy rates slightly increased during that time, but the ethnic demographics of the population remained static, despite the swift augmentation in the population. Although the town rapidly expanded during the ten years between the recording of the 1920 and 1930 censuses, agricultural remained the most important industry there; the remaining part of the employable citizenry performed a sufficient variety of other jobs such that the town appears to have attained at least a moderate level of self-sufficiency and economic independence during that time.

The Second Incorporation of Pittsville 1945-2006 (present date)

Senate Bill 350 was past and approved on 5 April 1945. By this Act the town of Pittsville had increased in size from the original 200 acres outlined in 1906 to include a larger area spanning from the west end of town from the lands of the Baltimore & Eastern Railroad Company near the State Road leading from Pittsville to Gumboro, Delaware, and to the east side of town as far as Cemetery Road and the Grace M. E. Church – including an area to the north and south of Main Street. The qualifications for voting in the election of town commissioners were considerably changed from those of 1906. Women were now among those eligible to vote and all citizens of Pittsville had to be legally registered to vote in the State of Maryland in order to cast a vote locally. In order to run for the position of commissioner all candidates had to be legal voters, own property in Pittsville and remain in Pittsville for the duration of their term, if elected. The number of officials was decreased to three commissions who were to serve without pay for one year and until their replacements were elected.²⁷

On 25 April 1947, an Act to repeal and re-enact, with amendments, the 1945 Act to incorporate the town of Pittsville was past and approved. The amendments to the previous Act are addressed in House Bill 530 and detail the changes made to the rules regarding voter eligibility, the date the next election shall take place, the process of selecting a town president and lastly setting up the set fines for violating any of the town's ordinances. For the most part the rules and guidelines set forth in the Act passed in 1945 remained the same.²⁸

The 40s & 50s

Shortly after the second act to incorporate the town of Pittsville on 5 April 1945, the town commissioners decide to install street lights as their first project in civic improvement. According to the then secretary of the town commissioners, James R. Truitt, for every \$100.00 of assessed valuation of non-tillable land the owners would be required to pay 50 cents towards financing the surveying and installation of 29 street lights. These 100 candlepower lights were connected by 17, 178 feet of wire, where 14 of the lights were hung on brackets and 15 were placed on mast arms. As new technology was available at the time of their installation, the lights were controlled by an electronic device that was able to detect dusk and dawn light conditions so as to be self-sufficient and unmanned. The town commissioners in 1945 were J. Allie Hamblin, president, James R. Truitt, secretary and Lester W. Brittingham as treasurer.²⁹



The next major development in the town of Pittsville's improvements was the advent of the stop sign. In November of 1957, the town officials were hopeful that 40 stop signs, placed at the intersections of every street that intersected the main streets in town, would help prevent accidents among the town's then 525 inhabitants. Previously, the only traffic signs in town were those on the state highways 50 and 343. In addition to the 40 stop signs, six signs were posted to advise motorist of the town's 30 mile an hour speed limit. From left to right, encircling the stop sign are V.V. Baker, bailiff, J. Allie Hamblin, commission president, Trooper 1c. John W. Baker, Bernard McGee, newly appointed town commissioner treasurer and James R. Truitt as secretary of the town commissioners.³⁰

The latest major improvement to Pittsville was in September of 1982, when the town's water system was being in-

stalled. According to a survey conducted in the spring of 1980, the Wicomico County Health Department found that more than half of the town's 276 homes had failing septic systems, as told by the then town council president Everett Baker. Some of the

older homes were not even hooked to a septic system and thus had to pipe raw sewage into open ditches in town. The whole project was to cost \$2.22 million, with \$1.31 million coming in the form of a grant leaving \$910,000 to be paid through a loan from the federal Farmers Home Administration over the following 40 years – each home owner being charged 80 cents per foot of frontage as assessed. In addition, a \$3 million sewer system and treatment plant was being planned in 1982. Only few residents

complained about the cost, such as Lisa Lynch, who had 300 feet of frontage on the highway leaving her with a higher cost than most.³¹





from its original location to rest on Dave White's farm from 1965 – 1990. The passenger station now resides at 7410 Maple where it was moved in 1990 by Jim Jackson who soon after restored it. This historically-important structure is now located in the Historical District near the home of Jim Jackson, local amateur historian and structural conservationist. The station is recognized as a historic building by the Preservation Trust of Wicomico County, Maryland.

The Pittsville Train Station

The Wicomico and Pocomoke Railroad was built in 1868 between the towns of Salisbury and Berlin. In 1876 a railroad bridge was built connecting the line to Ocean City; it was the only bridge until 1919. The railroad extended to Claiborne by 1890. The train known as the "Baltimore Flyer," or, alternately, "Black Cinders and Ashes," went through Pittsville at speeds of up to 60 miles per hour. The railroad bridge was washed out and destroyed during a big storm in 1933; by 1973, the tracks were pulled up entirely. Pittsville's Baltimore, Chesapeake & Atlantic Passenger Station was built in 1900, where Arthur W. Shockley served as the station agent from 1900 – 1935. The entire structure was moved



Delmarva Sheet Metal

In the early 1950s, Charles White had a truck-body-building shop here; after that time, it was used as a sweet potato warehouse by Jim Brittingham. Since 1968, it has been owned by Delmarva Sheet Metal.

P&M

Before 1877, J. Staton had a store here. Later on in this building's history, Ned Evans used it to store crates. During the 1970s it was used as a warehouse by J & J Insulation. The current structure was built around 1953, originally for use as a battery building. Poultry, primarily turkeys, were taught how to eat here over a period of one week; this was accomplished by putting marbles in the water and feed troughs. They would peck at the marbles and would gradually grow accustomed to eating in that way. During the 1970s, it functioned instead as the location of P & M Iron Crafts. Now, the building has become the home of Timmons Hardware.



Telephones Rings in Pittsville

In 1908, Mr. A. B. Truitt got the first telephone in the town of Pittsville in the store that is pictured; it was connected to the Willard-Diamond State Telephone Co. By 1923, there were a grand total of 14 telephones in Pittsville, all on one party line. In 1938, the Chesapeake and Potomac Company built an office and dial system here. A far more modern switching system, also originally built by Chesapeake and Potomac Company, exists in the town today, like the one shown here.



Crate Storage

This building, constructed in the 1940s, was used by Allie Hamblin to store crates. The town hall of Pittsville was located to the right of this crate house.





Strickland's Five & Dime

Before 1948, this charming structure was home to Victor Strickland's 5 & 10¢ store. He also sold groceries here. Between 1949 and 1958, the Knoxes sold groceries and hardware, as well as other general types of merchandise.

called "Addie's Lunch Room." By 1978, its name had been changed to "Hitching Post." In the same year, Charles and Ruth West purchased it and began calling it by its present name, "Pittsville Diner." It expanded in size in 1980 and once again in 1982.



Pittsville Diner

These two photographs show the Pittsville Diner, then and now. The restaurant changed both name and owner several times. In the early 1960s, Harold Powell moved the building, formerly the old naval surplus building, from Chincoteague to its present location. By 1968, it had come to be



Pittsville Store – Ownership History

1860 Circa:	James Laws		Lester Brittingham
1896-1910:	A. D. Truitt		Benny Wells – used furniture
1910:	Dr. James Freeny		Morris White – feed store
1910-1946:	Jr. Order of American Mechanics	1953-1955:	Tody Hearne – grocery store
1946-1965:	11 Trustees of Jr. Order of American Mechanics	1955-1958:	Josh Farlow – appliance store
1965-1982:	Charles Clark		Arthur and Mary Pennewell – wallpaper, paint, yard goods, underwear, variety store
1982:	Pittsville Fire Company	1958-1965:	vacant?
1982:	Jackson’s Floral Designs	1965-1982:	Charles Clark used as a warehouse
		1983-	Jim and Nadine Jackson—moved (1/83) and renovated into a flower shop

Pittsville Store – Businesses

1860-1896:	James Laws
1896-1910:	A.D. Truitt – general merchandise and post office
1910-1953:	“Gooseberry” Davis
	William Henry and Effie Brittingham – grocery store



Pittsville Market

- 1923 Southey Truitt built store after tearing down the old Bowden store. Also operated as a feed store opposite the bank. Eventually it became known as the old “Eshelman Feeds”.
- 1952-1956: Morris White ran store
- 1956-1957: Freddie White ran store
- 1959-1965: Harry Calloway ran store
- 1965-1970: John White ran store
- 1970-1983: Charles and Ruth West ran store
- 1983: Denver Moore ran store

Stanbury Wimbrow had a mill here. There was a steam engine in front, and he sold crates.

Paul Winbrow had a canning factory here. He closed this factory and bought Tom Middleton’s canning factory that was located on Pine Street.

These buildings were later occupied by Ned Evans Enterprises; the company made baskets. The date at which the building was taken down is unknown.

Bowden’s store was located here until 1923, when it was torn down and replaced by the Pittsville Market.



Ned Evans Enterprises

1914-1918: Ned Evans cut and shipped mine props from Pittsville. He bought mules in the west and sold them locally; he received a carload of them approximately every two months. He eventually became involved in the feed business and he had a coal business as well. Crates were also made and sold by him, where, at one time, there had been a carriage house. Pictured here is the house of Ned Evans



Pittsville Canning Company

Cleveland White had a canning house here, until a fire happened in 1908. Tom Middleton was the next to run this canning house, which mostly canned tomatoes during his tenure. It was eventually bought by Paul Wimbrow, who bought and ran it until 1940. All that remains of the canning company is the packing and labeling building, since it was made into an apartment house. The canning factory had employed 75-80 people. They produced private labeling for many customers. The tomatoes were canned in the factory and the waste ran into a nearby ditch.





Tingle Nursery Mail Order

This building, above, was part of the old Tingle Nursery mail order business. It was built in 1930 for use as a potato house by Bill Davis.



Walter Smith Store

The Walter Smith store sold general merchandise as well as country produce and their specialty, fresh meat. The Redmen Club met upstairs. It was built prior to 1877.

T. W. Davis and Co.

As early as 1832, R. Fooks operated a store from this site, below. In the early 1900s, Guy Hearn ran the store. By the 1920s, it was owned and kept by Calvin and Eva Donoway. It is now part of T.W. Davis and Co.; part of the original cucumber packing plant operation can be viewed in the back of the store.



Ernie Miller's Used Cars

This photograph shows Ernie Miller's used car business. In 1971, it was built; it was originally used as a furniture store. In 1978, it housed an arcade for a period of only six months. In 1981, the Church of God was located here, before they moved on to their present location.



Shoe Store

During the 1920s, this building housed George Shockley's shoe store and repair shop.

Tingle Printing: History

- 1907: Mr. Leeman Tingle started Tingle Printing in the building east of Mr. Brittingham's post office. It was then moved into the old school building Pickle Street; eventually, it ended up in the old Tingle Nursery office.
- 1947: The company was sold to Mr. Fred Bruckmann.
- 1972: The company was sold to Robert Timmons.
- 1984: The company was sold to Pat Lechty and Bonnie Dennis.



Rombro Bros. Shirt Factory

From 1901 to 1936, the Rombro Bros. Shirt Factory was located here. Sixty people were employed here, and in 1929 they received 15¢ per hour of work. There was no electricity; a stationary gasoline engine was used to run the lights and the machinery. Shirts for Carrol Rosenbloom, whose son owned the Baltimore Colts, were made at this factory. The building was constructed by Mr. H. James Truitt.



Juice Works

During the 1920s and 30s, this building was the site of William S. Moore's Juice Works; it eventually became part of Tingle Nursery. Local strawberries were capped here and were placed into 60 gallon barrels. They were then shipped to other factories where juice and preserves were made. Between 25 and 30 people were employed here.





Kauffman Building

The Kauffman Electric building was originally constructed in 1929 as the first fire hall. In 1888, one of the town's three saloons was located here before the fire hall was built; the saloon was closed down due to a petition drive organized by Ayers Church. The Kauffman Electric Co., shown here, stands where Samuel Farlow's cabinet and blacksmith shop once stood. Lewis Hickman also started a feed store here. Initially, he sold Red Comb feed until he started to grow and bag his own.



Farlow's Hotel

This building was home to Farlow's Hotel. Below, Farlow's Feed Store in the process of being moved, circa 1960.



Filling Station

From 1936 to 1940, this building was a filling station and lunchroom run by P.J. DeLis. During the period between 1940 and 1945, it was respectively run by Paul Campbell, Freddie White and Ed Truitt. During the late 1970s, it functioned as a church.



Seong Country Market

The Seong Country Market, pictured here, was originally a home owned by Mrs. Parsons circa 1899. It eventually became a store, owned by Paul Campbell circa 1945-the actual store area was built in and around the house.



Hatchery

In 1913, this building got its start as a hatchery for chicks — the hatchery area comprised the left portion of the current structure. By the 1930s, it was used as a hatchery for turkeys, operated by Walter Farlow; BBC Bagged Feeds were also sold here, and it was advertised in entirety as “Petersine Electric Hatched Chicks”. During the 1950s, the right side of the building was added as a feed house; in the early 1960s, Mom Farlow’s corn pone was made and sold here for about three years.



Main Street

Mary Clark riding her bike down Main Street in Pittsville;
the shot was taken looking east on the street, circa 1912.



Holloway & Staton

The remains of the Holloway and Staton building;
it is referenced in the 1877 Atlas.

Grocery Store

Before 1926, Walter Clark ran a small grocery store here, at right; it is now an apartment house. The building was actually turned around in the opposite direction in 1927.



Wreath Shop

The garage-like structure pictured above once housed part of Allie Hamblin's wreath-making and dying business. In 1970, this building was bought and taken over by Pittsville Sheet Metal Co.

Pittsville Motors: History

This building was the original home of G.C. Rayne and Co., which was started in 1915; they only sold Model T Fords to begin with. The cars came disassembled in boxes, and they were then assembled directly out of the railway cars. Dr. Lawrence Freeny bought the first car at this location in 1915. In 1919,

Mitchell Parker and Denver Richardson became partners in the business.

Around 1925, the present building was erected. From 1950 until the present, it has been known as Pittsville Motors.



Middleton's Florist and Nursery

This photograph shows Middleton's Florists and Nurseryman. Middleton was one of the first to root both hardwood and softwood plant materials.



Dr. James Freeny's Office

This building, at right, was Dr. James Freeny's office; it was built before 1877. Dr. Freeny died in 1915; his son Dr. Lawrence Freeny died in 1919 due to a flu epidemic that hit the area at that time. His home had been moved across the street from its original lot so a new house could be built in the same location, which still stands. It was built circa 1850. It became Allie Hamblin's Floral Design and Christmas Shop, above; latter becoming Jackson-Hamblin's Floral Design and Gift Shop.



Mrs. Byrd's Hotel

In the mid-1800s, Mrs. Byrd's Hotel, below, was a resting place for traveling salesmen. During the 1920s, it was known as the "Tom Dennis Hotel".



Sam Miller's Paint Shop

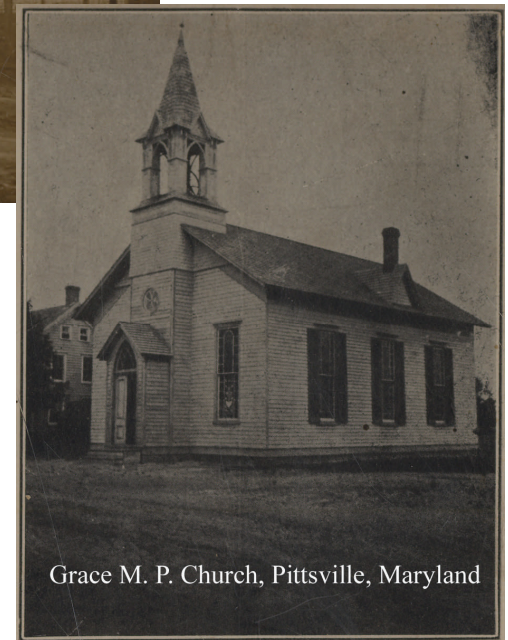
Shown above is Sam Miller's Paint Shop. In 1932, it was built by Lester Brittingham and was first used as a G.M. dealership. Mr. Vearl Baker bought the last Chevrolet sold here in 1955. In 1959, it was bought by the current owners, the Miller family.



Esham Hatchery

The building shown at left originally housed the Esham Hatchery. In 1983, it passed into the ownership of Carter's Electric.

Postcard Images From Pittsville



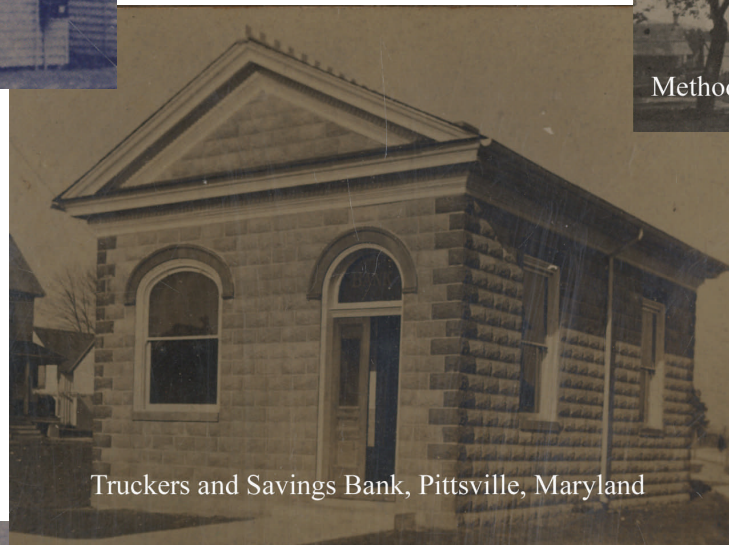
Postcard Images Form Pittsville



First Post Office, Pittsville, Maryland



Methodist Protestant Parsonage, Pittsville, Maryland



Truckers and Savings Bank, Pittsville, Maryland



New Post Office, Pittsville, Maryland
Circa 1965



Pittsville Train Station, Pittsville, Maryland

THE STORY OF AUDREY M. PHILLIPS' VISIT & TOUR OF PITTSVILLE

This recording was made Dec. 20, 1984 by Audrey M. Phillips, age 97 ½, of Berlin, Maryland, who lived in Pittsville during her teen years. She was assisted in the recording and conducted on a nostalgic tour of Pittsville by Frances Brueckmann and Fred Brueckmann. Fred had owned and operated the Tingle Printing Co. from 1947-1979, having purchased the printing business in 1947 from Mr. Leamon G. Tingle. Mr. Tingle had established The Tingle Nursery in 1906 and the printing plant in 1907. He operated two

businesses jointly at the same location on Railroad Avenue until sale of the printing facility which was later relocated in 1951 to a new location on present Maryland Route 346, pictured below.

Mrs. Audrey Phillips was born June 16, 1887. Her father, Robert Stansbury Wimbrow had a sawmill in Pittsville. He moved there 10 years until her marriage to J. Richard Phillips, Jr. in 1907. "This is a house on Railroad Ave. where we lived. We first lived in the house for one year where Mrs. Marion Parker later lived. I attended school in Pittsville and then attended business college in Salisbury, graduating in 1905. If my husband had lived," she said, "we would have been

married 77 years Dec. 18, 1984."

"Next door on the left lived a family named Brittingham who had a daughter named Esther. On the other side lived a family named G. U. Adkins. They had 3 sons, Clarence, Oscar and Walter."

At this location Fred pointed out the sign on the home of V. V. Baker, who had been a deputy sheriff of Wicomico County for forty years and was also a charter member of The Pittsville Fire Co. He was also a veteran of World Wars I and II. Mr. Baker died January 31, 1985. "I can show you where Dr. Freeny lived. He was our family doctor. Mr. Minos Davis was the principal of our school. I've kept in touch with that family. I want to stop there to see his daughter, Ruth Parsons," Mrs. Phillips went on.

Fred interrupted to say that Mr. Tingle had assisted in organizing The Truckers and Savings Bank (now controlled by Equitable Trust Co.) Also that Mrs. Phillips' father's brother, Paul Wimbrow, owned and operated a tomato canning factory on Pine Street near the present post office. Also, "Your son-in-law, Fred Brueckmann, operated a printing plant, Tingle Printing Co., for 32 years."



“The house on the corner of Railroad and Cemetery Avenues is the home of Alice Parker, widow of Charles Lemon Parker, who worked at The Tingle Printing Co. plant and later established a small shop known as Parker Printing Co. in the rear of his house.”

“This is where we used to walk on Sundays—to the cemetery and beyond this was a pond where the boys used to swim,” Mrs. Phillips said.



Fred: “This is the road to the home of ‘Rabbit Jack’ who subsisted on rabbits year round. The house appears on a calendar of Tingle Printing Co. for the year 1958. This area once was called ‘the strawberry capitol’ and berries were shipped daily by as many as 18 refrigerator cars. Mr. Tingle grew extensive acreage of berry plants, which were shipped

throughout the country. The crop failed, however, following infestation of plant stock and soil by a condition known as ‘red stele’.”

Mrs. Phillips viewed the house on railroad Avenue where she had lived. Next she was driven past the building occupied by The Tingle Nursery, which had also housed the printing plant until its removal in 1951. The building on the left had once housed a shirt factory. It later served as warehouse for the printing plant. The main nursery building (the original one) was destroyed by fire caused by hot cinders from a passing coal-burning locomotive. The railroad was the main means of transportation. It was commonplace for an excursion train of 18 passenger cars en route to or returning from Ocean City to pass through Pittsville daily during the summer season.

Mrs. Phillips: “My sister, Irma, had typhoid fever. She was so ill we asked the engineer not to blow the whistle at the crossing nearest us because it disturbed her so much. The engineer kindly complied with our request.” Then the group passed the former home of

Mr. and Mrs. Leamon G. Tingle, (now deceased) and the next house, according to Mrs. Phillips, was the home of Mr. Minos Davis. It is now occupied by his daughter, Ruth Parsons, and here Mrs. Phillips stopped for a short personal visit with her life-long friend Ruth. A box factory and a saw mill once stood on Railroad Avenue. The building bearing the sign “P and M Iron Crafts” is the building occupied before the 1950s by Mr. Ned Evans and his seed and feed business.





On the section of Railroad Avenue east of Gumboro Road is where the Pennsylvania R. R. Station stood. Formerly it was The Baltimore and Eastern R.R. Next to it going east parallel to the tracks was the freight station and then the “High Dollar Auction Block,” pictured above.

The passenger station building was located on the farm of David White on Gumboro Road in 1984, below.



Mrs. Phillips related how she remembered going into Mr. Sewell Farlow’s grocery store where one could trade an egg for a stick of candy.

The building on the northwest corner of Railroad Avenue and Gumboro Road is the original home of The Truckers and Savings Bank established in 1906 to serve local planters.

other types of decorations which are so popular now. This business brought people to Pittsville from far and wide both then and now.

It has recently been acquired by the Equitable Trust Co. after the local bank had opened branches in Ocean City and Salisbury, pictured at right.

The building around the corner next to the new water plant, was the dipping and dyeing shed for J. Allie Hamblin, who for many years bought evergreen materials, hollies, pines and laurel, etc. to be made into Christmas decorations. This process provided much needed cash income for local housewives and farmers. That was before the advent of plastic and



Traveling north on Gumboro Road past the new water plant, Mrs. Phillips pointed out Ayres Church, below, as it looked before the new church hall was built. "Next



to the church stands the former home of Mr. and Mrs. George Truitt. They had three daughters and two sons. One daughter, Mame, married Mr. Thomas Davis; another, Maude, married a man named Tunis; a third, Sally, moved to Wilmington."

The next house going north was the Collins home. "Mr. Elbridge Collins, a son, moved to Ocean City and later became Mayor. another son became a Methodist minister. He died very young. Another lady who lived along this road did our laundry. She had a baby whom she named Audrey."

A stop was made at the David White farm for a picture of the old RR Station building. Mrs. Phillips said she took the train every Monday morning to Salisbury for business school and later to her job at E. S. Adkins Co. for one year. We turned to the right on RR Avenue. On the left opposite the bank had stood a large two section building occupied by a feed business. Some of the principal commodities sold here were Farlow's Dog Feed and Farlow's Horse Feed. Both were excellent products. The business was managed by Jane Farlow but it ceased operation and Jane (wife of Otis Farlow) later became secretary and office manager for the Tingle

Printing Co. (about 1960). It was cut in two sections and moved to Route 346 and joined to the printing plant where it now serves as a warehouse for the present Tingle Graphics plant. Pictures show the dismantling.

A little farther west on Railroad Avenue is a small glass-front building which once housed an undertaking parlor operated by Mr. William Howard Wells. After some years the building housed for a short time a small printing shop operated by Carl Ratcliffe after his retirement as shop manager for many years of The Tingle Printing Co. Mr. Ratcliffe was succeeded

at the Tingle plant by Bill Truitt for a number of years. Next on the right, new to Mrs. Phillips is the town park. The building on the site is the old auction block where thousands of dollars worth of strawberries, cucumbers, peppers and possibly other products changed hands each year by public auction. The building was originally situated on R. R. Avenue, next to the freight station, mentioned earlier. The large white house beyond the park was for some years the home of Paul G. Wimbrow, then owner and operator of the Pittsville Canning Co. on Pine Street.

Returning to the center of town the group passed the old fire house now occupied by Kaufman Electric Co. and across Main Street is the new fire house—the pride of Pittsville. On the left opposite the old fire house is the site of Mr. A. B. Truitt's store and the former location of the original post office. Mrs. Phillips' brother, Paul Wimbrow, served as postmaster for a time. The building that housed the A. B. Truitt store was the meeting hall of The Junior Order of United American Mechanics, a fraternal and insurance order that was widely popular 50 to 75 years ago. The building was moved in recent years and located adjacent to the former Hamblin Enterprises and now operated by Mr. and Mrs. James

Mrs. Phillips recited an incident of about 1904. While attending an ice cream festival in the Junior Order hall, her father, Stansbury Wimbrow, called attention of the group at the festival to a red glow in the sky toward the east. He announced that the town of Berlin, twelve miles away, was ablaze in a ravaging fire.

Near the old post office is a two story building which for many years housed the T. W. Davis Co., buyers and shoppers of wholesale produce such as berries, cucumbers, peppers, etc., grown extensively in the surrounding farmlands. Near the post office once stood a tiny building occupied by the town restaurant operated by Mrs. Hattie Whitney. It was the only eatery in Pittsville then.

Across the street from the restaurant was a boarding house owned by a Mr. Dennis and his two daughters, Ethel and Nellie, pictured below.



Mr. Phillips spent the night before his wedding on this boarding house, having arrived by train, December 17, 1907.



“The big house across the street,” Mrs. Phillips said, “was the home of Mr. A. B. Truitt, owner of the grocery store, and father of James Truitt, later tobacco cashier of The Truckers and Savings Bank for many years,” pictured above. Mr. A. B. Truitt was also father of George Truitt and Nellie Truitt Hamblin.

The two-story building on the southwest corner of Pine and Main Streets was the sorting and packing shed for produce. It was managed



by Mr. Sewell Farlow. On the first floor was a grocery store and the old store front is still mostly intact.



Moving east on Main Street, Mrs. Phillips pointed out the huge house occupied in the early half of this century by Dr. Freeny and his family, pictured above. The little square building in the yard was Dr. Freeny’s office. Dr. Freeny’s son Lawrence married Mabel Elderdice of Salisbury. Shortly beyond, Mrs. Phillips recounted her marriage to J. R. Phillips, Jr. in Grace Methodist Church, then known as “Methodist Protestant, while Ayres Church viewed earlier was “Methodist Episcopal.”

Turning the corner opposite Dr. Freeny's old home, the group arrived at the Jackson-Hamblin property. The gray building on the corner was the site of Mr. J. Allie Hamblin's renowned business of floral decorations, etc. The large mustard colored building with brown trim, looking for all the world as though it



came from a Charles Dickens story, is the thriving successor to Mr. Hamblin's emporium and the future site of the developing Pittsville historical display under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. James Jackson.

The semi-bungalow across the street was the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. Allie Hamblin, both now deceased. Mrs. Hamblin was a retired school teacher. The house in Mrs. Phillips' time was the earlier home of Mr. Arthur Shockley who married Jennie Farlow, a relative of Sewell Farlow and an aunt of Mrs. Paul Wimbrow, Mrs. Phillip's sister-in-law. Mrs. Phillips mentioned "Hus" Hamblin who had been a commercial photographer in Pittsville during her early years. He

took a picture of her and her girlhood friends—Eva and Marian Davis, Maude and Sally Truitt and Irma and Aubrey Wimbrow (Mrs. Phillips.) "Out in the country, we knew the Riggins, the Campbells and the Sheppards," she recalled.

At this point Mrs. Phillips left the car to meet Nadine Jackson and to visit the Hamblin store. After leaving the store Mrs. Phillips finished her tour of Pittsville by traveling east on Main street to Timmons Street past the old greenhouses of the Tingle Nursery Company, now owned by Vernon Hearne. He and Mrs. Hearne live across Route 346 opposite the printing plant now known as Tingle Graphics.

Mrs. Phillips concluded her tour of Pittsville by visiting Mrs. Ruth Parsons, her girlhood friend. She later recalled one of the oldest businesses of Pittsville, W. T. Middleton and Sons, now still active in nursery and floral business. Another business

was the hatchery of Mr. Walter Farlow, later operated by his sons, Essel and Otis.



Left to right: Nadine Jackson, Audrey M. Phillips and Frances Brueckmann.

Tidbits of Pittsville History

▪The names of the one-room school houses within 5 miles of Pittsville during the early twentieth century are as follows: Powell, Hearn, Farlow's, Friendship, Glass Hill, Quakason and Smith; up to eight grades were housed within the one room.

▪Drexel Truitt, a native of Pittsville, was the male model for the George Washington's silhouette on the quarter and acted under the stage name of David Ward in screen roles. He arrived in Hollywood in 1927, where his resemblance to President George Washington enabled him to play the character of Washington in films. By 1935, Truitt retired to raise cattle in the Verdugo Hills with his wife Sarah. His death at age 55 was attributed to a fall he had three years prior, leaving him as an invalid – he died at his home in Tujunga.

▪The first roads in Pittsville were merely trails; through time, they became dirt and were finally paved by oyster shells. It took a quantity of 58,000 bushels of oyster shells to pave one mile of road.

▪Allie Hamblin's holly wreath-making business grew very large during the 1930s and 40s. During that time period, over 100,000 wreaths were shipped every year!

▪Parsonsborg's former train station stands on West Road; Pittsville's can be found at 7410 Maple Street in Pittsville; the Willards Station is the current post office in Willards.

▪Pittsville was known as the strawberry capitol of the world. Up to 52 rail cars a day left Pittsville Station with the popular produce. In 1900, a farmer would receive approximately 1¢/quart. Around 1940, the "Red Stele" disease killed the strawberry business in the town.

▪The Pittsville Bank was started in 1906.

▪Ned Evans held mule auctions in Pittsville, he also operated a basket factory and a saw mill.

▪The Pittsville Post Office was started around 1855.

▪The Ayers Methodist Church was formed around 1840. They succeeded in have 3 saloons closed in the year 1888.

▪The Grace Methodist Church was started around 1820.

▪Two canning factories were located in Pittsville; both are gone today. Pittsville was also the home to two sewing factories, one juice factory, several saw mills, and a grist mill. All are now gone – a town that formerly had ten stores now has only two.

▪Pittsville was actually a larger town than Ocean City before the year 1880.

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¹³ Session Laws, 1847 (Wicomico and Pocomoke Railroad): Vol. 612, page 206; Laws of Maryland, Chapter 202. Session Laws, 1864 (Wicomico and Pocomoke Railroad, renewed): Vol. 531, page 145.

¹⁴ Session Laws, 1853 (Worcester Railroad Company): Vol. 403, page 380.

¹⁵ 1850 Federal Census, Hilary R. Pitts, Series M432, Roll 299, page 261, Household 300. 1860 Federal Census, Hilary R. Pitts, Series M653, Roll 481, page 693, Household 1289. 1870 Federal Census, Hilary R. Pitts, Series M593, Roll 599, page 780, Household 61. 1877 Atlas of the Eastern Shore of Maryland, page 39.

¹⁶ Maryland Geological Survey, 1906, Vol. VI, page 563. This makes reference to the changing of the name from Cross Roads election district to Pittsburg election district.

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¹⁸ George H. Corddry Jr., *Wicomico County History*, Peninsula Press, 1981, Salisbury, Maryland, page 41. Salisbury Advertiser, Salisbury, Maryland, July 11, 1908. Here there is an anonymous article titled, *Town of Pittsville: Sketch of its foundation and Growth*.

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²⁰ Salisbury Advertiser, Salisbury, Maryland, July 11, 1908. Here there is an anonymous article titled, *Town of Pittsville: Sketch of its foundation and Growth*.

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²³ 1920 Federal Census, Pittsburgh District, Pittsville, Series T625, Roll 678, pages 49-56.

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³¹ Newspaper clipping, accession number 2006.352, Edward H. Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History & Culture at Salisbury University, Salisbury, Maryland.